



# ATF NIBIN Program Hits of the Week

May 19 to June 9, 2003



NIBIN Branch, Firearms Programs Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

**Week of 6/9:** Using NIBIN, the Houston Police Department is making progress in identifying a gang responsible for a string of armed robberies. In each of the robberies, one of the robbers fired a warning shot, leaving cartridge casing evidence at the scene. Houston police have recovered the evidence from each incident and submitted it for NIBIN entry. Two members of the gang were arrested after the first incident, and the gun used in the robbery has been linked to four subsequent robberies by the group. Additional members are at large. Investigations continue in the cases, which are now known to be linked by a common firearm.

**Week of 6/2:** Just a month after the Somerset County (New Jersey) Prosecutor's Office received its NIBIN equipment, it has logged its first hit, linking a weapon seized from an armed suspect to a shooting that took place almost a year earlier. In the first incident, the victim stated that a shooter had fired a weapon at him, striking his vehicle several times. Cartridge casings were collected at the scene, and bullet fragments were recovered from the vehicle; no suspects were identified in the shooting. Eleven months later, the county's Narcotics Task Force arrested a suspect and seized his weapon. The weapon was testfired and the results entered into the county's NIBIN system. Correlation revealed a potential link to the shooting; after examining the original evidence, a firearms examiner confirmed the link. Investigations continue in the cases.

**Week of 5/27:** NIBIN use at the Virginia Department of Forensic Science's Richmond laboratory has enabled Richmond Police Department investigators to link a convicted felon and a homicide. During the investigation of a homicide in Richmond, a witness told police that he had been walking with the victim when a vehicle pulled to the curb a short distance away. Three armed suspects stepped from the vehicle and shot at the victim, killing him. The witness could not identify any of the shooters; several .22 cartridge casings were recovered at the crime scene, and submitted for NIBIN entry at the Richmond laboratory. Two weeks later, Richmond police observed a suspicious vehicle. When officers pursued the vehicle, the driver attempted to flee. The driver, a convicted felon, was arrested; his .22 rifle was retained as evidence. When the rifle was testfired and the results entered into NIBIN, firearms examiners discovered an otherwise unavailable link to the homicide two weeks earlier. Though investigations continue in the cases, the ballistic link is vital in assisting investigators to identify the shooter.

**Week of 5/19:** New Orleans Police Department has linked a violent offender to two crimes using the NIBIN system. In the first incident, an armed suspect in a car began firing at pedestrians on a street. As one of the victims fled down an alley, the shooter pursued him and continued to fire. Three cartridge casings were recovered at the scene. The subject was later identified from arrest photos produced by the police department. In another incident on the same day, two armed suspects robbed in an apartment complex. After the robbery, the suspects tried to enter another apartment in the complex. They fired through the door of the apartment, injuring another victim. No suspects were identified in this armed robbery. When NIBIN assisted police by helping them link these two incidents, police gained a valuable lead into the armed robbery and shooting for which no suspects had been identified. A suspect has been charged in the first crime, and investigations continue in the second.